

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VICTOR 00182 071757Z

ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 HUD-01 EB-08 SCA-01 DHA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 312

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

STATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VICTORIA 182

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, SE

SUBJECT: VISIT TO SEYCHELLES OF AID HOUSING OFFICER

REF: A) NAIROBI 2978

B) VICTORIA 162

C) VICTORIA 163

1. NAIROBI-BASED AID HOUSING OFFICER, NEAL GOODSON, VISITED SEYCHELLES MARCH 25-31 IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN ALLEVIATING CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF ADEQUATE LOW-COST HOUSING. PRESIDENT JAMES MANCHAM RECENTLY MADE TO AMBASSADOR MARSHALL (REFTEL A). IN ADDITION TO BRIEF MEETING WITH MANCHAM AT MARCH 27 STATE HOUSE LUNCHEON JUST PRIOR TO PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE ON OVERSEAS TRIP, GOODSON HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER RENE, MINISTER FOR FINANCE CHAMERY CHETTY, CHIEF ECONOMIST OSCAR SPENCER, CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER ERROL RENE AND NEWLY INSTALLED EXPATRIATE STAFF OF NEW HOUSING DIVISION.

2. MR. GOODSON WAS GIVEN THOROUGH BRIEFINGS ON HOUSING CONDITIONS IN SEYCHELLES AND URGENCY GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO FINDING FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES REQUIRED TO ATTACH TWIN PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANDARD LOW-COST HOUSING AND ABSOLUTE HOUSING
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SHORTAGE. PRIME MINISTER RENE POINTED OUT THAT 1974 BRITISH STUDY HAS RECOMMENDED CONSTRUCTION OF 600-700 HOUSING UNITS PER YEAR TO CONTROL HOUSING PROBLEM BUT, IN PAST THREE YEARS, NO LOW-COST HOUSING UNITS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED BY GOS. RENE (AND CHETTY) EXPLAINED, AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH, THE GOVERNMENT REGARDS HOUSING AS KEY ELEMENT IN MAINTENANCE OF CURRENT POLITICAL STABILITY IN SEYCHELLES. MR. GOODSON EXPLAINED THE AID HOUSING

GUARANTEE PROGRAM TO SEYCHELLES' OFFICIALS AND, ON WORKING LEVEL,
COMPILED MATERIAL FOR REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. COMMENT: POST AND GOS ARE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF GOODSON'S
TIMELY VISIT AND THE GREAT EFFORT HE PUT INTO IDENTIFYING
PROBLEM AREAS IN LOCAL HOUSING SCENE AND POSSIBLE COURSES OF
ACTION. WE HOPE THAT FOLLOW UP VISIT, PERHAPS, TO INCLUDE A
SHELTER SECTOR ANALYSIS, WILL BE APPROVED. FACT THAT HOUSING
IS MAJOR CONCERN OF GOVERNMENT (AND THAT U.S. IS REGARDED AS
POTENTIAL DONOR) CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED BY FACT THAT BOTH PRESIDENT
AND PRIME MINISTER RAISED ISSUE ON AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL
CALLS (REFTEL B AND C).
MATTSON

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